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STAT

Move to Revamp OAS Picking Up Momentum

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There is growing sentiment among the Western Hemisphere nations to modernize the machinery of the Organization of American States, which many diplomats claim is archaic unworkable.

One target of those favoring a restudy is the status of the Inter-American Conference, supreme organ of the regional organization. According to the charter, the Inter-American Conference must meet every five years to review progress and chart the next five years.

However, the last conference was held 10 years ago in Caracas, where the conferees voted to hold the 11th conference in Quito. Diplomatic observers say the political climate is such that it appears probable the Quito conference can never be held in the Ecuadorean capital. They say mobs would be certain to turn out to dramatize Ecuador's interminable territorial dispute with Peru.

Ecuador, currently ruled by a four-man military junta, thus will neither schedule the long-overdue conference nor permit its turn to pass to another nation.

Ad Hoc Sessions

Other Latin nations feel even five years is not often enough for the supreme organ of the OAS to meet and favor ad hoc sessions of the Foreign Ministers when the need arises. It was at such a meeting in July that the Foreign Ministers voted the mandatory severance of relations with Communist Cuba.

President Francisco Orlich of Costa Rica has openly called for more flexibility in the OAS. He favors more frequent and less formal sessions of the hemisphere's top leaders, at least once a year.

Uruguay's ruling nine-man council, when that nation reluctantly broke relations with Cuba last month, made a vague call for an Inter-American Conference. The Uruguayans are disturbed about the juridical aspects of the mandate that forced them to sever relations with Castro and want a review at the OAS top. They point out that the mandate for all nations of the hemisphere to break with the Cubans is meaningless if Mexico continues its non-compliance.

Argentina also has urged that a conference be held.

convening of a special, or extraordinary, conference, probably in Washington or in Buenos Aires, late this year or early in 1965.

In the meantime, there is increasing pressure from the new republics of Jamaica and of Trinidad and Tobago to be admitted to the OAS. The two British Commonwealth nations are expected to complain to the United Nations soon against the delay in admitting them to the regional organization.

Guatemala, which claims British Honduras as its territory, opposes admission of Trinidad and Jamaica because of its dispute with Britain. Argentina also has a deep interest in the candidacy of Trinidad and Jamaica, since it has a claim before the United Nations for sovereignty over the British-held Falkland (Malvinas) Islands.

Nov. 18 Meeting

The OAS is scheduled to meet on Nov. 18 to elect a new chairman of the council for a one-year term to succeed Juan Bautista de Lavalle of Peru. Observers say there is growing sentiment among the Latin nations for the election of the 70-year-old American representative, Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker.

Washington is believed to be reluctant to give the appearance of dominating the OAS with an American as chairman, but Latin diplomats say the State Department has no objection to Mr. Bunker's election if there is a genuine draft. Another leading candidate for the chairmanship is Colombia's highly regarded Ambassador Alfredo Vazquez Carrizosa.

No American has held the post since 1952. Diplomats indicate the important vice chairmanship may go to Venezuela's Ambassador Enrique Tejera

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